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justifiable in afterwards assigning his reasons for rejecting the parts omitted. Solon's second letter *never reached either the Editor, or the writer of that part of the retrospect which censured his former letter*, notwithstanding Solon's malicious insinuation, that his letter *may* have been lost without meeting the eye of either. Nothing is more unfair than dealing in insinuations. We trust the characters we have hitherto supported in life, will effectually shield us from all such unfair attacks. The writer, who substitutes insinuations instead of argument, forfeits all claims to be admitted into the lists of fair controversy.

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*For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.*

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#### ON THE WORD PICTURESQUE.

SIR,

IN their refined speculations on the nature and objects of taste, ingenious authors are apt to confuse their readers, and, at length, to grow confused themselves, by an excess of minute attention, which, in reality, brings the subject *too close to the eye* for clear and distinct vision. Truth lies in the natural view of things, not in the microscopical; and after dwelling long on the nice distinctions of philosophical criticism, we find it difficult, by this overstraining of the mental eye, to recognize, what had before, instantly, and instinctively, excited our sympathy, or attracted our admiration.

Thus after all that has been said or sung, with regard to the PICTURESQUE, we cannot help deeming it merely a subdivision of the BEAUTIFUL, and that its nature and effects will be best understood by recurring to the literal meaning of the term Picturesque, i. e. after the manner of painting, in the stile of a

good painter. "Ut pictura, poesis." That is, poetry is or ought to be a speaking picture, or *picturesque*, and poetic images are, chiefly, such lively and picturesque copies of visual impressions, which memory recalls, and fancy combines, in the manner best calculated to attract, and *fix attention*.

The generality of poetic images have been so often brought before us, in wearisome iteration, that such images, themselves mere shadows of impressions of the sense, being thus still farther diluted as it were, into mere shadows of a shade, they lose all power of stimulating the memory, or exciting the imagination. The ear only, is visited by a succession of pleasing sounds, and the words pass over it, without any correspondent ideas; a chosen few have, however, the talent of inverting this order, and by a seeming creation, or by a happy combination, can communicate to the ideas of memory, or to the imagery of fancy, all the liveliness and full effect of actual sensible impressions. "His ardent fancy, says Gibbon, kindled every idea to a sentiment, and every sentiment to a passion." The words, the ideas, the sensible impression, the correspondent feelings, form the links of the chain of association, which genius traverses, like the flame of electricity, with such rapidity indeed, that the effect of the whole on the reader of sensibility, is simultaneous. Hence, the power of ideal imagery, complicated as it is with its train of associations, often exceeds that of our simple, and unconnected sensations.

Whenever the attention of the reader is arrested by the descriptive, or figurative creations or combinations of the poet, in such a manner that the images excited partake in a great degree of the strength and vividness of the sen-

sible impression, then the term Picturesque is properly applied.—This word however, like most other terms, diverges from its original application, the scenery of nature, to the expression of many analogous ideas. Each word in our language may be said to have one direct or vertical meaning, and from that perpendicular, descend, in oblique lines, the metaphorical applications. These in all their grades, are but repeated examples of that great and constantly operating law of our nature, the associating principle. This principle may be compared to the *cellular substance* in the anatomy of the body, which is the great connecting medium of every organ of the human frame, and even of every part of the same organ; and it is matter of surprise, how the author of philosophical essays,\* can be so hostile to the Hartleyan Hypothesis, when his whole book, or at least the better part of it, is one continued, and beautiful illustration of the agency and predominance of the associating principle, throughout all the philosophy of mind.

Now when the reader's attention is arrested; when he *stops* to admire; when the figurative language rivals the vivacity of visual impression, so as to make us think we actually saw, what is only recounted; the description, whether of nature in general, or of human nature, or of the works of art; it may still be properly called *picturesque*.

An example or two will best illustrate this, and as common examples, by use, pall upon the ear, and do not sufficiently excite attention; I shall endeavour to assist, by their novelty, the picturesque effect. The first is from Beaumont and Fletcher, the second from Plautus.

\* Dugald Stewart,

Fie! you have miss'd it here, Antiphila,  
These colours are not dull, and pale enough,  
To show a soul so full of misery,  
As this sad lady's was—do it by me,  
Put me on th' island.—

I stand upon the sea-beach, now, and think,  
Mine arms, thus, and mine hair blown by  
the wind

Wild as that desert, and let all about me  
Be teachers of my story—do my face  
If thou hadst ever feeling of a sorrow  
Thus—thus, Antiphila—strive to make me  
look

Like sorrow's monument, and the trees  
about me

Let them be dry and leafless; let the rocks  
Groan with continual surges, and behind  
me,

Make all a desolation. See!—See—wrenches,

A miserable *life* of this poor *picture*.

Here, the description is so lively that we summon up in our fancy, the impressions of sense. We do not rest on the words and words alone, as in the generality of cases, but we proceed from the signs to the things signified, by a pleasing effort of the mind, which is stimulated by novelty into action, instead of passively receiving, through the ear, a succession of sounding syllables. It is *picturesque*, and the following from old Plautus is not less so. How pleasing that a picture drawn two thousand years ago, should still be so fresh and lively in its colouring!

Dx... Quid vides? Sc. Mulierculas  
Video. sedentes in scapha sola duas,  
Neque gubernator usquam illis esse potuit.  
Ut afflictantur misellæ! luge, quæ, perbene,  
Ab saxo avortet fluctus ad litus scapham,  
Non vidisse undas me majores censeo.  
Salvæ sunt, si illos fluctus devitaverint;  
Nunc—nunc, periculum est, ejecit alteram,  
At in vado 'st; jam facile enabit. Eugepæ!

Viden alteram illam ut fluctus ejecit foras;  
Surrexit, horsum se capessit: salva res.  
Desilivit hæc autem altera in terram a  
scapha,

Ut præ timore in genua in undas concidit!  
Salva 'st, Evasit ex aqua: jam in litore est.

This is certainly a picturesque description. We see the figures move on the retina of imagination, almost as distinctly as they would appear on the retina of the eye. I should think that this term *retina* may be derived, with more philosophical truth, from the verb "retineo" to retain, than from *rete* a net, to which the mere expansion of the optic nerve has little resemblance. It is now ascertained\*, that the visual impressions from external objects, are really *retained* for a longer or shorter time, according to their vividness, on the *retina*, considered as the expansion of the optic nerve; and it is more than probable, that the brain itself, that great mass of nerve, which is called the sensorium, has the organic power of retaining *still longer* the vestiges of impressions from external objects. When the power of attention is exerted, these vestiges of the original impressions are perceived, or it may be said, *felt* in the brain, or common sensorium, and are named *ideas of memory*, or if they happen to be combined, not as they were at first received, but in a new order of association, they are then denominated *ideas of imagination*.

In some cases of extreme sensibility, the effect of the original constitution, and not infrequently the effects of disease, these ideas become so vivid as to be mistaken for real impressions, and excite just the same sensations as are excited by surrounding objects. They then constitute the phrenzy of the poet, or the delirium of the common man. In a less degree of sensibility, it is called a faithful memory or a lively imagination.

Of all the senses, the objects of

sight, seem to leave the most permanent impressions; and the correspondent vestiges or ideas in the brain, are the most frequently, and therefore the most readily, summoned up, and recognized. In our dreams, which may be called the scattered and confused *vestiges* of our senses, those of *sight* form always the principal assemblage, and dreams are therefore justly entitled to the epithet *picturesque*, being the floating pictures or copies of the impressions from external objects, which remain on the brain, during a state of semi or sub-excitement.

The term *idea*, or image has, indeed, given rise to a deceptive phraseology, apparently implying that the organic changes or phases of the brain which take place from the sensible impressions of external things, are as perfect resemblances and miniature copies of these objects, as the picture on the retina of the eye is of the external objects to which that organ is directed. A mere optical phenomenon, observed no doubt from the earliest times, confined to one of the senses only, but that one which has the most prevailing influence in our waking or sleeping states, has given rise to the long received theory of ideology, and has indeed modified all modern languages, in correspondence to that theory. Because there is a picture or image of external objects formed at the bottom of the eye, we have no reason to conclude that the organic change of the brain, whatever it may be, is from the transmission of a similar picture or image to the brain itself, under the new denomination of *idea*. Much less ground have we to apply a theory so unsupported by fact in regard to the sense of sight, to the other senses. To all of which however the same phraseology has been applied, founded on the particular phenomenon present-

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\* See the most ingenious paper of Dr. E. Darwin on ocular spectra, inserted in the *Zoonomia*.

ed on the bottom of the eye, by the refraction of light through its different humours. We talk of the ideas of taste, of touch, and of sounds, as well as of sight, and if we had said images, (a synonymous word,) the absurdity must appear manifest.

I should imagine the term *vestiges*, to be the most appropriate and truly descriptive, as applied to the changes produced on the brain by the impressions through the senses, not merely in their present and immediate operation, but leaving behind these traces or *vestiges*, which are, in their natural order, called ideas of memory, and in a novel combination, the ideas of fancy. The most creative imagination is restricted to the materials supplied by the organs of sense, in its wildest combinations, and he who ascends "the brightest heaven of invention," must receive what may be called his raw material, through the portals of the five senses, like the most common of mortals.

Whether awake, or in our dreams, the term Picturesque can with propriety be applied only to the impressions or the vestiges of the sense of sight. Our dreams are Picturesque, as being chiefly employed in the retracement of visual impressions, and the picturesque effect is the more lively from the absence, during sleep, of all impressions of the other senses. A man born blind, or who, like Dr. Blacklock, had become so, in his infancy, must be deprived of this nocturnal imagery, and, it is probable, is therefore less disposed to dream than other people. It is likely too, that after confinement, for a certain time, in total darkness, the vestiges of visual impression would become so completely effaced, that we should never dream of external objects as conveyed to us by the sight, which is now receiving such constant and reiterated stimulus,

during our waking hours, as will not entirely cease during our sleeping ones.

There may be an application of the term Picturesque to Painting, and a picturesque landscape, &c. expresses only a choice, yet chaste selection of the most striking beauties in the scenery of nature. The Picturesque in Poetry is such a lively description as arrests the attention, and makes us, in the faith of a warm fancy, and a feeling heart, almost mistake the vestiges on the brain, for the actual impressions of the sense. Thus to give another example or two:

Arcite is grimly visaged: yet his eye  
Is like an engine bent, or a sharp weapon  
In a soft sheath. Mercy, and manly courage  
Are bed-fellows in his visage: Palamon  
Has a most menacing aspect, his brow  
Is grav'd, and seems to bury what it frowns  
on;  
Yet sometimes 'tis not so, but alters to  
The quality of his thoughts—Long time  
his eye  
Will dwell upon his object. Melancholy  
Becomes him nobly—so does Arcite's  
mirth;  
But Palamon's sadness is a kind of mirth,  
So mingled, as if mirth did make him sad,  
And sadness, merry.

Again,  
His worth is great, valiant he is, and temperate,  
And one that never thinks his life his own,  
If his friend need it. When he was a boy,  
As oft as I return'd, he would gaze upon  
me,  
And view me round, to see in what one  
limb  
The virtue lay to do those things he heard.  
Then would he wish to see my sword, and  
feel  
The quickness of the edge, and in his hand  
Weigh it.

In the following descriptions of VENUS and DIANA, we see instances of the Picturesque, of that creative imagination which embodies the sha-

dows of a shade, and gives them an apparent life and reality.

The Goddess self, some noble hand had wrought,  
Smiling she seem'd, and full of pleasing thought,  
From ocean as she first began to rise,  
And smooth'd the ruffled seas, and clear'd the skies.  
She trod the brine, all bare below her breast,  
And the green waves but ill-conceal'd the rest.  
A lute she held: and on her head was seen,  
A wreath of roses red, and myrtles green.  
Her turtles fann'd the buxom air above,  
And by his mother stood an infant Love,  
With wings unfledg'd; his eyes were banded o'er;  
His hands a bow, his back a quiver bore,  
Supply'd with arrows bright and keen, a shining store.

The graceful goddess was array'd in green,  
And at her feet were little beagles seen,  
Watching with upward eyes the motions of their queen.  
Her legs were buskin'd, and the left before  
In act to shoot: a silver bow she bore,  
And on her back a painted quiver wore.  
She trod a waxing moon that soon would wane,  
And drinking borrow'd life, he filled again.  
With downcast eyes, as seeming to survey,  
The dark dominions her alternate sway.

Our most picturesque poet, or rather the best miniature painter in poetry, who has appeared of late years, is Dr. Darwin. He seems, however, to have been led into a faulty extreme; by dwelling almost exclusively on visual impressions, without borrowing much from those other sources, which affect the common sympathies of our nature.

The term Picturesque is equally applicable to prose as to poetry, and a picturesque style is perhaps the most desirable, by the impression it never fails to make on the reader. Let us take an example or two from Gibbon.

"In the more simple state of the Arabs, the nation is free, because

each of her sons disdains a base submission to the will of a master. His breast is fortified with the austere virtues of courage, patience, and sobriety: the love of independence prompts him to exercise the habits of self-command, and the fear of dishonour guards him from the meaner apprehensions of pain of danger, and of death. The gravity and firmness of his mind is conspicuous in his outward demeanor. His speech is slow, weighty and concise: he is seldom provoked to laughter; his only gesture is that of stroking his beard, the venerable symbol of manhood, and the sense of his own importance teaches him to accost his equals without levity, and his superiors without awe." A second picture from the same author, who unites the copiousness of Livy, with the condensation of Tacitus, and from whom it is most difficult to take a word away without destroying a beauty, or of adding a word without enfeebling the vigour of the sentiment.

"With a golden apple in his hand, he slowly walked between two lines of contending beauties: his eye was detained by the charms of Icasia, and in the awkwardness of a first declaration, the prince could only observe, that, in this world, women had been the cause of much evil—and surely, sir, she pertly replied, they have likewise been the occasion of much good. This affectation of unseasonable wit displeased the imperial lover: he turned aside in disgust. Icasia concealed her mortification in a convent; and the modest silence of Theodora was rewarded with the golden apple."

Thus the picturesque in poetry as in prose appears to be placed in the art or talent of summoning up the ideas or vestiges of visual impressions, in such a defined and forcible manner, as to affect us nearly, in the same degree as actual sensations. I shall not dwell at present on the me-

taphorical, or, as they have been lately called, the *transitive* applications of this fashionable word, being all of them cases illustrative of the pervading principle of association, of which indeed the word *transitive* is in itself expressive. I fear, I have exceeded the limits assigned to such contributions in your modest, and meritorious publication.

A. P.

*To the Proprietors of the Belfast Magazine.*

#### ON REAR WINGS.

IN the sixth report of the board of education inserted in your 26th number, (p. 173) I observed the following words, "another wing was intended in the *rear* of the hospital." Not knowing of any fowl whose wings are in its rear, I request to be informed, by some of your correspondents; 1st, whether a wing in the rear is not properly a tail, and 2dly, whether a thing whose wing is a tail, is not a bull.

Your obedient servant,

COCKNEY.

#### *Appendix, No. 11.*

TO THE FIRST REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF ROADS AND CARRIAGES.

*Evidence in favour of Single-horse-carriages.*

\* BY ARTHUR YOUNG.

IF it was not much more liberal to confess an error than to persist in one, I might perhaps have been induced to attempt, by every means, to establish a practice which experience has not sufficiently founded; one of the first pieces I ventured, many years ago, to the eye of the public, was a memoir in the *Museum Rusticum*, on the use of broad-wheeled waggons, drawn by eight horses,

rather than common ones by four. Further experience has however convinced me, that in proportion as the draught is lessened the power is increased, until perfection is attained in a one-horse cart.

The most general farmer's carriage in this kindgom is a waggon drawn by four horses, in which is conveyed corn, hay, wood, &c. But not dung or earth, which are usually moved by carts or tumbrels drawn by three or four horses: carriers use almost universally broad-wheeled waggons, drawn by eight horses.

In France the draught is very generally large two-wheeled carts, drawn by three, four, or five horses.

In Scotland, waggons were once general, which were changed for large carts, and since for small ones, drawn by one horse.

In Ireland, nothing is known in common but the one-horse car, with low wheels beneath the body of the machine. Gentlemen have built carts; and some have imported English waggons, and men to drive them, but these are universally laid aside, on conviction of their inferiority.

During my residence in Ireland, I had the opportunity of seeing the use of the Irish car in all sorts of work, and it was with some degree of amazement that I found a tool, which, in the eyes of a man accustomed to waggons, was not much better than a wheel-barrow, clearing corn and hay fields with an expedition nothing equivocal. The inferiority however to a one horse cart is great.

So enlightened as the professors of husbandry are in England, it is a bold undertaking to find fault with any practice that obtains very generally among them; yet in this point of employing waggons, and large carts, for the various works that are to be done cheaper with

\* From his *Annals of Agriculture*, vol. 18, P. 178.